

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Office of Fire and Aviation
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

May 9, 2001

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EMS Transmission 05/10/01
Instruction Memorandum No. OF&A 2001-015
Expires: 09/30/02

To: State Directors

From: Director, Office of Fire and Aviation

Subject: Assistant Disbursing Officer Requirements

Program Area: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) applies to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Assistant Disbursing Officer (ADO) program.

Purpose: This IM transmits the mandatory requirements for BLM's ADO program.

Background: Within the last several years, a number of major changes have impacted the ADO program. The first change, effective January 1, 1999, included the requirement to withhold state and Federal income taxes from emergency fire fighter wages. The second major change, effective January 1, 2001, was the physical relocation and transfer of responsibilities for developing and maintaining the Emergency Fire Fighter (EFF) Pay program from the Alaska Fire Service in Fairbanks, Alaska, to the Department of Interior's National Business Center in Denver, Colorado. These changes, coupled with the approach of this year's fire season, merit a review of BLM's ADO requirements.

Policy/Action:

1. ADOs will follow the BLM *ADO Handbook*, which includes the EFF Pay Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and User Manual, and the Department of Treasury manual to process all emergency firefighter payrolls. These documents are available on the NBC Website.

2. ADOs must use the automated EFF/Vendor Pay Application to process payroll, generate checks and reports. This is the only way to ensure taxes are correctly withheld.
3. Fire Management Officers, Hiring Officials and ADOs will ensure the emergency firefighter hiring requirements in the *Interagency Incident Business Management Handbook* (Pay Plan for Emergency Workers) are being met.
4. ADOs will only accept original tax withholding forms (W-4, W-5, and applicable state forms) from hiring units. Hiring units are responsible to ensure the forms are completed and signed prior to forwarding to the ADO. The ADO will retain the original forms with the payroll documentation.
5. Emergency Firefighter Time reports, OF-288s, submitted to the ADO for payment, must indicate the incident (resource order) number and the appropriate charge code. Hiring units are responsible for ensuring these are noted on the OF-288.
6. ADOs must have available, at a minimum, one additional person to assist in the manual audit of the payroll process. This meets Treasury requirements and ensures payroll accuracy and integrity.
7. Treasury check inventories must be accomplished in accordance with Treasury requirements (January, March, May, July, September, November). Inventory reports must be received by the 15th of the following month at the Kansas City Financial Center, attention Yvonne Nance. An individual, other than the ADO, completes the check inventory and compares it to the records of the ADO. Both parties sign the inventory. A number of BLM ADOs have been remiss in ensuring timely completion of check inventories. Supervisors should ensure this requirement is met.
8. Field offices requesting designation of a new ADO should send the request through the State Director to the Office of Fire and Aviation, attention Ed Lewis, FA-107. Approved requests will be forwarded to the National Business Center for ADO designation. ADO revocations should be sent directly to Allen Pope, BC-612, with a courtesy copy to FA-107.
9. The Bureau, in conjunction with Department of Treasury, will establish an ADO program audit process and schedule.

Time Frame: This IM is effective upon receipt.

Budget Impact: The impact of the IM is minimal.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: None

Coordination: This IM was coordinated with the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Financial Management Service.

Contact: If you have any questions regarding this IM, please contact Ed Lewis (FA-107) at 208-387-5166

Please ensure this information is disseminated to State Office and Field Office Fire Management Officers and ADO supervisors.

Signed by:
Lynn Findley
Acting Director, Office of Fire and Aviation

Autneticated by:
Pat Lewis
Supervisory Mgmt. Asst.